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Promotion and protection of human rights: human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms

Identical letters dated 15 May 2012 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of the letter of Dr. Ali Akbar Salehi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, addressed to you (see annex) concerning a despicable act of an American pastor in Florida, who burned copies of the Holy Quran on 29 April 2012.

It would be appreciated if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under the agenda item 69 (b).

(*Signed*) Mohammad **Khazaee**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the identical letters dated 15 May 2012 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly

I write to you with utmost grief to express my shock and dismay over the egregious act of an American pastor, who burned copies of the Holy Quran and a depiction of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) in Gainesville, Florida, United States of America, on 29 April 2012. A similar heinous act was committed in March 2011 by the assistant to the same pastor, the images of the scene, broadcast on the Internet, outraged hundreds of millions of Muslims all around the world, and incited violence in northern Afghanistan at the time, where at least 12 people lost their lives.

On behalf of the people and Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, I shall condemn this odious act of burning the Holy Quran and stress that such acts amount to incitement to hatred and violate the universally recognized norms requiring respect for religions and cultures as well as the principle of peaceful coexistence of peoples of different religions and cultures.

I would like to request you to condemn, in the strongest terms this act of sacrilege as a manifestation of racism, Islamophobia and intolerance and urge all States to outlaw such acts or reinforce the existing law in order to deny free hands to those who persist in their evil campaign of incitement to hatred and violence.

I would appreciate if you could have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under the agenda item 69 (b).

(*Signed*) Ali Akbar **Salehi**